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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 10, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LUKE MESSER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks, I have come to the House floor on numerous occasions to talk about the interim nuclear agreement that this administration is negotiating with Iran. I have come here to discuss exactly what that administration is—or, more importantly, isn't—negotiating and what that means for our national security and the stability of the region as a whole.

While there can be no question that we need to continue having that discussion about whatever else the regime in Tehran decides to do, like send warships off of our eastern coast, we also need to take some time to discuss what exactly the real power brokers in Iran are doing when they aren't talking about destroying Israel or attacking America.

Many of my colleagues have been down on this very floor before to discuss the oppressive nature of the Iranian regime. It is important that we remind folks just how tyrannical those who are in power there really are.

So, just what exactly have we seen since the election of the self-described moderate President in Iran? We have largely seen the continuation of the same human rights abuses that we have seen for years in Iran. We have seen the grip of Tehran's media and Internet sensors tighten since Mr. Rouhani came to power. Web sites have been restricted and mobile phone applications have also been blocked. There have also been reports of numerous newspapers and blogs being shut down altogether and their reporters and editors being arrested.

Now, what do they all have in common, Mr. Speaker? What they have in common is these people advocate for reform and are critical of the regime in Iran. We have seen a number of Iran's executions occur at an alarming rate since Mr. Rouhani took office. There are many theories as to why this is happening, but the fact remains, somewhere upwards of 60 people are being executed each month in Iran. Some of these executions are being carried out in public with those in charge intentionally leaving the bodies to hang from construction cranes in public areas.

We have seen the persecution of religious minorities. We should all support freedom of religion, and the regime's persistent crackdowns and arrests of

Christians, the Baha'is, and other religious minorities should trouble everyone.

Mr. Speaker, as I have talked about before, Iran continues to prop up Hezbollah across the Middle East. Their involvement across the region is widely noted. Of particular concern should be their connection to Syria. Iran sends trained murderers and weapons to prolong the brutal civil war that continues to destroy Syria, separate families, and cause millions to flee their country.

Sadly, this is not even a comprehensive list of what goes on inside of Iran. We could discuss their appalling human rights trafficking record or their full record of sponsoring terrorism, in addition to what we have already discussed.

Why is all of this important when we are talking about the administration's pursuit of a nuclear deal with Iran? Two reasons: first, it should serve as a stark reminder of just whom exactly the Obama administration is really negotiating with; second, it shows the true intentions and belief of those that are really in power in Iran. It shows the disconnect between the rhetoric of the self-described moderate President and what is really going on within Iran's borders. Above all, it shows where the real power lies, which is in the hands of the Supreme Leader of Iran.

To forget about the plight of the Iranian people and not address what happens domestically in Iran would be a failure, plain and simple, and one which will continue to cost innocent lives.

BREAD FOR THE WORLD'S ANNUAL HUNGER REPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to and highlight Bread for the World's annual hunger report. This year's report is entitled, "Ending Hunger in America." Frankly, it couldn't be more appropriate or timely.

Mr. Speaker, over 49 million Americans go hungry every year, and we in the Federal Government—we in this Congress—are not doing nearly enough to fight to end hunger in this country. In fact, over the past 6 months, Congress stood by and let an \$11 billion cut to the premier antihunger safety net program, SNAP, take effect. To make matters worse, Congress followed up by enacting another \$8 billion cut to SNAP as part of the farm bill. We should all be ashamed.

The fact is Congress continues to make it harder and harder for the hungry in America to make ends meet and put food on their table. Although the Obama administration came into the office under the most difficult economic conditions in nearly a century, they also came in with a lot of promise. In fact, President Obama came in with, among other things, a pledge to end childhood hunger in America by 2015. That goal was achievable. Unfortunately, we have gone backwards over the past 5 years.

While I still believe there is time for the Obama administration to turn this around and make some real headway in the fight to end hunger, the sad reality is we are not going to end child hunger in America by 2015, and may not even make a significant dent in hunger by the end of this administration.

Just because President Obama will not meet his stated goal doesn't mean we should give up. That is why I am encouraged by this report from Bread for the World. First and foremost, it is refreshing that this report is honest and blunt. It rightfully states that hunger is a subset of poverty and that we can't truly end hunger without addressing poverty.

Just look at a few of the statistics listed in the report:

The average incomes of the top 1 percent of households rose by 19.6 percent in 2012, while the incomes of the other 99 percent grew just by 1 percent.

Nearly two-thirds of SNAP recipients are children, elderly, or disabled. Among SNAP households with children and at least one working-age, non-disabled adult, 62 percent work while receiving SNAP and 87 percent work in the prior or subsequent year, which hopefully should put to rest this distortion that somehow people on SNAP don't want to work.

Another statistic here is that while children make up roughly 24 percent of our total population, they comprise one-third of the Nation's poor.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that poverty must be addressed because that is the root cause of hunger. But Bread for the World lays out achievable and timely goals, goals that are not pie in the sky but actually doable. They call an end

for hunger in America by 2030, and they do so in a four-point plan: one, a jobs agenda; two, a stronger safety net; three, human capital development; and four, public-private partnerships to support community-led initiatives against hunger.

They call for achievable goals of a 25 percent reduction in hunger by 2017, a 50 percent reduction by 2023, and completely ending hunger by 2030. We can do this if we make the political decision to focus on and commit to ending hunger.

I fully support this plan. I only want to move quicker to achieve the goal of ending hunger. This report rightly states:

Ending hunger in the United States will require leadership not only at the Federal level, but also the State and local levels.

We already have Governors and mayors who are working to combat hunger. Governors Deval Patrick of Massachusetts and Don Beebe of Arkansas are committed to this effort. Former Boston Mayor Tom Menino was a leader; and I know the new mayors of New York and Boston, Bill de Blasio and Marty Walsh, are just as committed. And they aren't the only ones, but we need more help and commitment. The White House should convene a conference on food and nutrition to build on the recommendations in the Bread for the World report and come up with a comprehensive, holistic plan to end hunger in America.

Hunger at its core is a political condition. We know how to end it. We have the food and the resources to end hunger once and for all; we just don't have the political will to do so. Bread for the World, through this annual report and through their everyday actions, is trying to build the political will to end hunger in America. I know we can do it.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

In these days give wisdom to all the Members, that they might execute their responsibilities to the benefit of all Americans. And may their constituents understand, as well, that many in this country have interests at odds with their own, and that the task entrusted to their representatives is extremely complex.

Bless us, O God, and be with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

THE STATUS QUO DESTROYS JOBS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, a weekend editorial by The Washington Times stated:

The unemployment rate fell in January, which ought to be good news. But it isn't. Over the past decade, we have fallen into a strange and puzzling wonderland of opposites, where "economic recovery" comes with no growth, and unemployment rates drop when people aren't working.

The President's misleading message conveys that fewer jobs and government dependency is the new status quo, which destroys fulfilling lives.

Last week, a Congressional Budget Office report confirmed what the NFIB